

Message Text

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72

ACTION ARA-10

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COME-00 LAB-04 SIL-01 /090 W
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R 022058Z MAY 75

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9936

UNCLAS TEGUCIGALPA 1779

1. AS IS TRADITIONAL IN HONDURAS, MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS WERE HELD BY WORKERS, CAMPESINOS AND STUDENTS IN THE COUNTRY'S MAJOR CITIES. THE MAJOR DEMONSTRATIONS WERE HELD IN SAN PEDRO SULA AND TEGUCIGALPA AND SMALLER ONES TOOK PLACE IN LA CIEBA (BY SUTRAFSCO, STANDARD FRUIT UNION) AND IN CHOLUTECA (BY THE CGT, CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT LABOR CONFEDERATION).

2. THE SAN PEDRO SULA TURNOUT WAS NOT LARGE BY RECENT STANDARDS AND THE SPEECHES WERE MODERATE. FESITRANH (NORTH COAST FEDERATION) ASKED FOR A COMPLETE INVESTIGATION OF THE GOH ADMINISTRATIVE APPARATUS TO ROOT OUT CORRUPTION. FESITRANH WILL MAINTAIN AN ATTITUDE OF "OBSERVATION AND VIGILANCE" TOWARD THE NEW GOVERNMENT AND WILL, WHILE SUPPORTING GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FAVORING THE WORKERS, STRONGLY OPPOSE MOVES WHICH HARM THE WORKERS' INTERESTS.

3. THE TONE OF THE LA CEIBA AND TEGUCIGALPA CELEBRATIONS WAS MUCH DIFFERENT. STANDARD FRUIT CAME UNDER STRONG CRITICISM FROM SUTRAFSCO REPRESENTATIVES AND MOST SPEAKERS WERE FROM LEFT-LEANING UNIONS. THE PARADE AND MEETING IN TEGUCIGALPA WERE THE LARGEST IN RECENT YEARS AND WERE CLEARLY DOMINATED BY THE RADICAL STUDENT GROUPS (FESE AND FRU) AND THE COMMUNIST UNIONS. BANNERS AND SPEECHES
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CALLED FOR SUPPORT OF THE MELGAR GOVERNMENT, NATIONALIZA-

TION OF THE BANANA COMPANIES WITHOUT COMPENSATION, PUNISHMENT OF THE GUILTY IN THE UB SCANDAL AND THE END OF CIA AND US INFLUENCE IN HONDURAS.

4. THE ONLY SURPRISE IN THE EVENTS OF MAY DAY WAS THE LARGE SIZE OF THE TEGUCIGALPA TURNOUT. FESITRANH'S MODEATION ON THE UB QUESTION LIKELY STEMS FROM ITS RECOGNITION THAT THE FRUIT COMPANIES ARE IMPORTANT TO ITS FUTURE. THE FEDERATIONS POSITION OF CAUTION TOWARD MELGAR'S GOVERNMENT IS PROBABLY DUE TO A GROWING FEELING THAT THE CLOSENESS OF LABOR TO THE LOPEZ GOVERNMENT DID NOT PRODUCE THE DESIRED RESULTS.
SANCHEZ

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